MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

March 2003

for Buse Lake Protected Area

Ministry of Water, Land
and Air Protection
Environmental Stewardship
Division

BUSE LAKE
PROTECTED AREA

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

March 2003

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BUSE LAKE PROTECTED AREA
MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENT

Introduction

Purpose of the Management Direction Statement

The purpose of this management direction statement (MDS) is to provide strategic management direction for Buse Lake Protected Area. A management direction statement describes protected area values, management issues and concerns; management directions focused on immediate priority objectives and strategies; and, directional statements from other planning processes. While strategies may be identified in the MDS, the completion of all these strategies is subject to funding and funding procedures. In addition, all development associated with these strategies within the protected area is subject to the BC Parks' Impact Assessment Policy.

Setting and Context

Buse Lake Protected Area is located approximately 20 kilometres southeast of Kamloops on the old Vernon Highway. The 212 hectare protected area takes in Buse Lake and the steep forested slopes and cliffs of Buse Hill. The protected area was recommended as a special features protected area through the Kamloops Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) to include the unique alkaline conditions of Buse Lake and to capture a representative example of the landforms and forests of the Robbins Range.

This protected area was recommended through the Kamloops LRMP process and formally established on January 25, 2001 by order in council under the *Environment and Land Use Act*. Provision was made in the establishing order in council for allowance of recreational rock hounding in the protected area. In all other respects, the protected area is managed as if it was a Class A park.

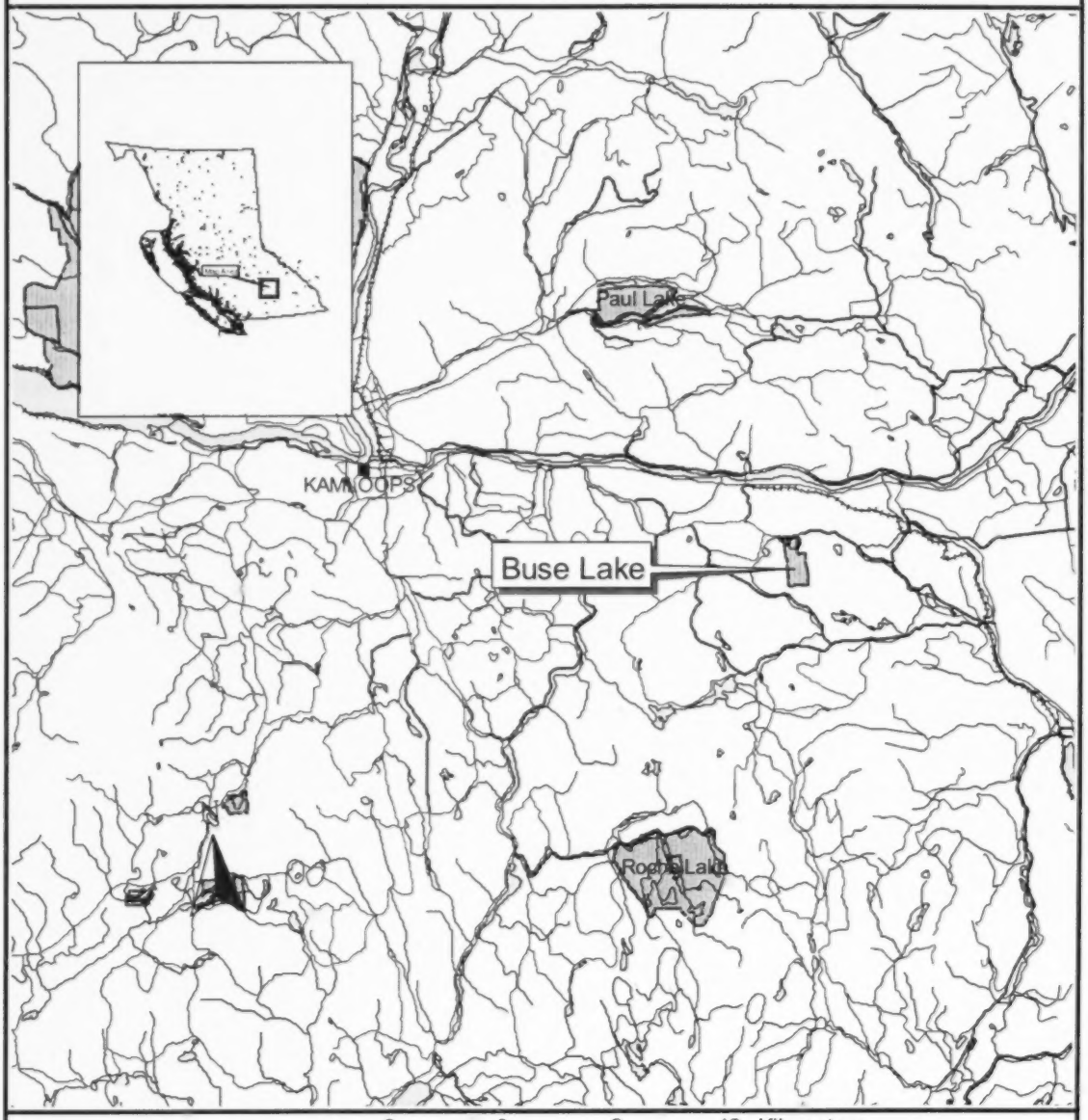
Protected Area Attributes

Conservation

- The unique water chemistry and high alkalinity of Buse Lake creates special habitat conditions for brine flies, and other aquatic insects and plants that are adapted to salt rich environments. The lake and marl edges attract a variety of waterfowl and shorebirds.
- The protected area lies totally within the Thompson Basin Ecosection and provides a small representative elevational gradient through the PPxh2 (Ponderosa Pine very dry hot) and IDFxh2 (Interior Douglas-fir very dry hot) subzone/variants. The lower portion is mostly grassland with some open ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir forests representative of the PPxh2 subzone/variant. The mid to upper regions are covered primarily by climax stands of Douglas-fir and old ponderosa pines with sparse understory of common snowberry, saskatoon and birch-leafed spirea, representing the IDFxh2 subzone/variant. These subzone/variants are reasonably well represented in other parks and protected areas (e.g. Lac du Bois Grasslands) within this ecosection and in other ecosections.
- The north facing terrain above Buse Lake rises steeply through forested slopes to a high cliff face, topped by rocky summits. The 200 metre high cliff formations include an impressive detached rock tower. The steeply sloping terrain on the south side of the protected area drops down into upper grassland habitats on adjacent grazing lease lands.

Figure 1: Context

Buse Lake



- The protected area exhibits some of the diversity of rock types found in the Robbins Range which originate from Cenozoic (Upper Triassic), Mesozoic and Paleozoic eras. The lower portions are comprised of volcanics and the upper slopes are a complex array of basalts, breccia, schists and conglomerates.

Recreation and Tourism

- Buse Lake is a favourite location for birders and naturalists. The lake is known for shorebirds, with some relatively rare species such as American avocets, which are attracted to the rich alkaline shoreline.
- The top of Buse Hill offers expansive views of surrounding landscapes of the Thompson Basin. The hike to the top of the hill from the south is relatively short and easy.
- Local rock hound enthusiasts have collected blue opal from the area immediately adjacent to the protected area, lying southwest of Buse Lake. While most of the rock hounding activity occurs outside of the protected area, there is some interest in using the park. Rock hounding activities in the protected area are confined to low impact rock chipping and surface collecting.

Cultural Heritage

- First Nations use of the area is unknown, although it is likely that some hunting and food gathering activities occurred.
- There are no recorded archaeological sites or features in the protected area.

Significance in the Protected Areas System

- Conservation values are primarily related to the unique aquatic ecosystem of Buse Lake. The protected area also provides a small representative sample of the Thompson Basin Ecosection.
- Buse Lake provides opportunity for scientific study and long term monitoring of alkaline aquatic and shoreline environments.
- The protected area is of regional significance for hiking, nature study, bird watching and rock hounding. Buse Hill forms a local hiking destination, offering excellent panoramic views of the surrounding countryside.

Land Uses, Tenures and Interests

Access

The protected area is accessed off of the Old Vernon Highway, about 20 kilometres out of Kamloops.

A 20 metre right-of-way is dedicated for public access through a grazing lease on the south side of the protected area, leading in from the Robbins Range road. This right-of-way allows for four wheel drive or walk in access to the protected area.

Tenures

- Grazing license held by Larry Campbell, administered through Ministry of Forests, Range Division.

Existing Land Use Activities and Facilities

- Grazing use.
- Grazing exclosure was established around the lake in 2000 to protect riparian habitats.
- Pre-existing cattle access trail crosses through northwest portion of the protected area.

Adjacent Patterns of Land Use

- Rock quarry operation by Lafarge Canada Inc., abutting the protected area at the southeast corner of Buse Lake. The quarry provides rhyolite ash that is used as an additive for cement production.
- Cattle grazing on land surrounding the protected area.

First Nations Interests

- Unknown.

Other Agency Interests

Ministry of Forests administers range use in the protected area.

Private and Public Stakeholder Interests

- Local rock hounders use land adjacent to the protected area. Protected area designation under the *Environment and Land Use Act* allows for non-commercial (recreational) rock collecting in the park.

Role of Buse Lake Protected Area

The primary role of this park is the protection and conservation of natural values of the site. Buse Lake Park will maintain Buse Lake in a natural condition and provide a small representative sample of forests, grasslands and geological features of the Thompson Basin Ecosection. A secondary role is to allow opportunities for low impact, dispersed types of recreation activities such as hiking, nature study and rock hounding.

Management Commitments and Issues

Management Direction from Previous Planning

This management statement, future management plans, and all resulting management actions will follow the intent and criteria set out by the Kamloops LRMP for Buse Lake Protected Area.

Management Issues

The following management issues have been identified:

Theme	Issue
Protecting ecological values	• Inventory of flora and fauna is incomplete. • Parties by local youths have led to littering, threat of wildfire and extensive soil erosion on the south side of Buse Hill. • Uncontrolled vehicle use is impacting the south side of the protected area.
Public access and safety	• Dedicated right-of-way access to the top of Buse Hill should be formalized. • Exposed drop-offs from the cliff edge pose a safety concern.

Management Direction

Priority Management Objectives and Strategies:

Objective	Strategy
To protect the protected area's natural, recreational and cultural values	• Establish long term monitoring of conditions and changes to protected area habitats with particular attention to the aquatic and riparian environs of Buse Lake. • Restrict vehicle use in the protected area except for management purposes. • Close road (leading to top of Buse Hill from Robbins Range road) to walk in access trail at the Robbins Range road. • Work with Range Division and local rancher to recover better range conditions in the protected area. • Monitor development on adjacent land; discuss potential mitigative measure with developers. • Strictly enforce a no campfire policy in the protected area. Control all wild fires in the protected area. • Encourage non-destructive studies of Buse Lake and in the protected area generally to gain better knowledge of protected area environments.
To provide for access and recreation use of Buse Lake Protected Area. Recreational activities include hiking, nature study, birding, rock hounding, and hunting.	• The protected area will be managed as a natural area with no special trails or facilities. Public access route to Buse Hill from Robbins Range road will be identified and signed as a walk in access from point of access at Robbins Range Road. Information at trail entrance will warn people of steep cliff face. • Recreational rock hounding use will be limited to low impact rock chipping and surface collecting. Use of shovels, picks and other digging tools will not be permitted. • There is sufficient space adjacent to the protected area along the Old Vernon Highway for birders to park and view Buse Lake.

Consultation and Future Planning

Planning and management of the protected area will conform to the intent and directions as set forth in the province's Protected Areas Strategy. The Environmental Stewardship Division is accountable for planning, administration and management of the park through application of the laws, policies and regulations granted under the *Park Act* and the order in council establishing the protected area. The Environmental Stewardship Division will coordinate with other agencies, the LRMP table, various public planning groups and First Nations in developing management plans for all of the new parks and protected areas arising from the Kamloops LRMP.

This management direction statement has been reviewed and approved in principle by the Kamloops LRMP implementation team. This management direction statement is intended to provide direction and guidelines for managing Buse Lake Protected Area for the foreseeable future.

Zoning Plan

The zoning plan as shown on the adjoining page reflects the intent of the LRMP recommendations for Buse Lake Protected Area. The entire protected area is zoned as Natural Environment to maintain the area in a natural condition while allowing some recreation.

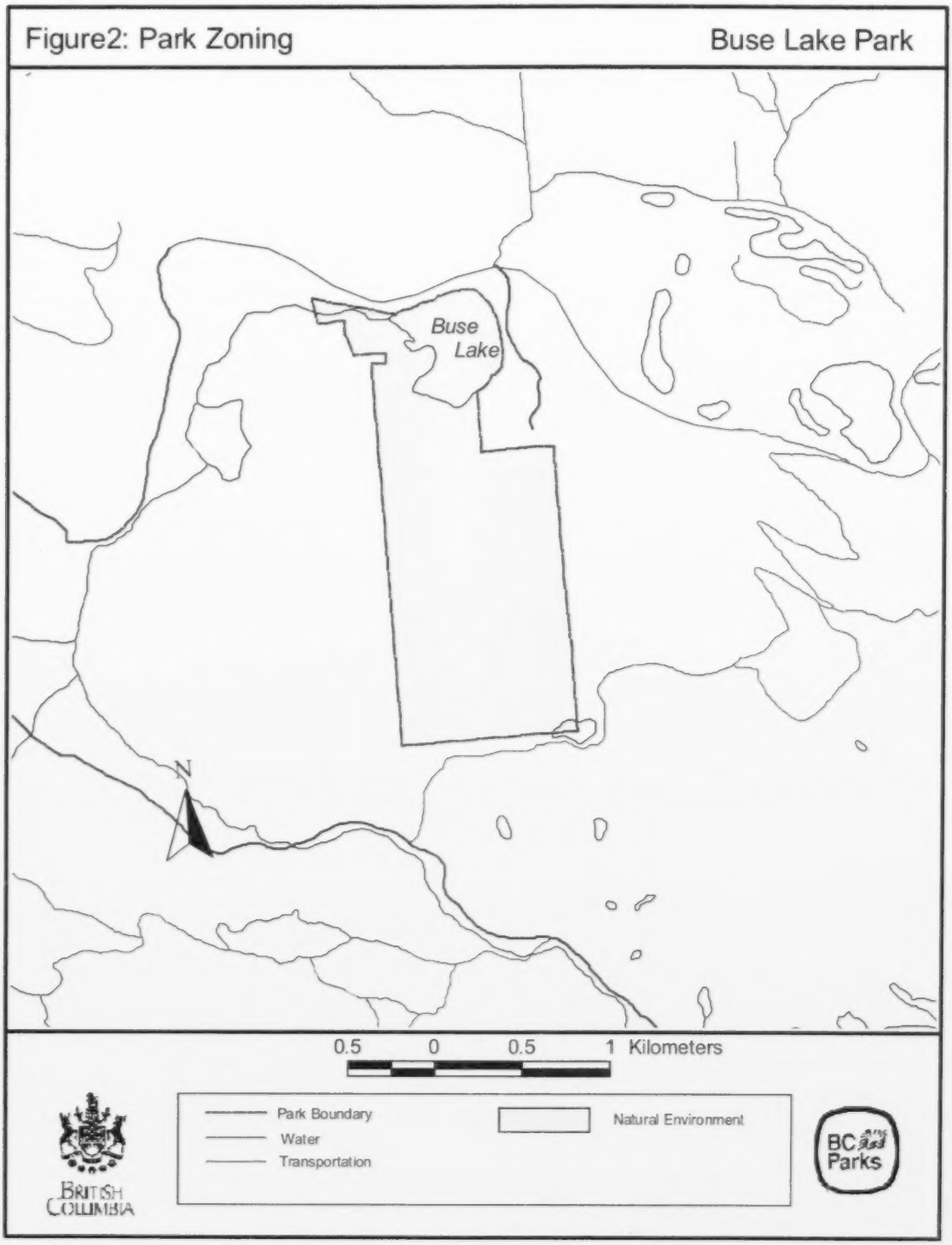


Figure2: Park Zoning
Buse Lake Park
Buse Lake
N
0.5 0 0.5 1 Kilometers
Park Boundary
Water
Transportation
Natural Environment
BRITISH COLUMBIA
BC Parks

Appendix I - Table of Acceptable Activities, Uses and Facilities for Buse Lake Protected Area

The following table provides a summary of acceptable uses, activities and facilities in the protected area.

Activity/Use/Facility	Acceptability
Aboriginal rights	Y
Hunting	Y
Fishing	N/A
Trapping	N2
Grazing (domestic livestock)	N2
Recreational Rock Hounding	Y
Utility corridors	N2
Communication Sites	N
Horse Use/ Pack Animals	Y[3]
Guide Outfitting (hunting)	N
Guide Outfitting (fishing)	N/A
Guide Outfitting (nature tours)	M
Commercial Recreation (facility-based)	N
Commercial recreation (non-facility based)	M
Water Control Structures	N2
Fish Stocking and Enhancement	N
Road Access	Y[1]
Off-road Access (snowmobiling)	Y[3]
Off-road Access (motorized)	N
Off-road Access (mechanical activities)	Y[3]
Motorized Water Access	N
Fire Management (suppression)	Y
Fire Management (prescribed fire management)	M
Fire Management (prevention)	Y
Forest Insect/Disease Control	M
Noxious Weed Control	M
Exotic Insect/Disease Control	M
Scientific Research (specimen collection)	M
Scientific Research (manipulative activities)	M

Y= allowed, subject to conditions identified in the interim management statement or management plan
N= not allowed
M= may be permitted if compatible with protected area objectives.
N1= allowed for expressed management purposes only
N2= not normally allowed, but if present at time of PA establishment, will normally be allowed to continue

[1] Road access plan for this area designates open and closed roads
[2] By permit only
[3] On designated trails only
[4] On designated lakes only